

ports to spinning yarns as the pleasantest and most congenial manner of breaking the monotony of the situation, and the one man who possesses the most fertile brain and vivid imagination, it is safe to say, stands high in the esteem of his shipmates.

In these startling midnight tales the truth is entirely ignored, and in fact, any semblance thereto would at once stamp the narrator as being wholly devoid of ideas and not worthy an audience. To the contrary, he who could entertain his listeners with the recital of some incident which never did nor possibly could occur was at once a prime favorite of the whole ship's company.

It was a moonlight night and the noise ship James and Mary was running down the trades with everything drawn in and aloft. The starboard or sea side of the mate's watch had the deck, and some of the men were seated in a group upon the main hatch.

"Now, I'll tell you what it is, my lad," began an old, weather-beaten son of a gun, who had slipped under the name Tom Long, "these 'ere latitudes we're in are the pleasantest that a sailor can find anywhere around the world. 'Cause, you see, it ain't too hot or too cold: it's just about right. But I've been in my time where a feller would a-wish

While that reached clear to the horizon, and all we could do was to stand still and hold on. Two days and two nights we waited, and much dared to go, but even to get a gun was a fearful thing, for he would be blown overhead. "Timber was raised the land, and a wave was coming," said the old man. "Great Neptune!" shouted the skipper. The chap that's got us in town going to pile us upon that reef."

"Well, I don't know," he began, "I show down a bit, and when within about a mile of the shore, what do you think?"

"I don't know, Tom, don't know," quipped the red-headed fellow.

"Well, lad, as I was telling you to—whales, that was each a good cubber—length from blow-hole to fluke, broke the water, and the other to the top of one to start a and the other to perk,

"We're got to make the Winter here," said the old man.

"I don't know," said his wife, as well as he did, and it didn't make his feel any better for it. Every day it grew colder and colder until along about Christmas time the cold was so bad that the old man galley stove for the ice in his kettle.

The captain would stand on the quarter-deck and give an order. "Land, land," he would say, and the old men would be him and cut the words off his board as they froze into icicles, they carry them forward to the mate, who

"Three of four of us, with the second

But then only two of us got ashore alive. We happened to strike a little patch of sandy beach that was kind of sheltered.

"We made for an island that was near

brace and that sheet, this tack and those halyards, until when it was time to go below the men thought more of